



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BMO HARRIS BANK AWARDS GRANT TO
WOMEN'S COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF TRAILBLAZER
WOMEN'S BUSINESS AWARD PROGRAM**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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Madison (September 10, 2013) – The Wisconsin Women's Council is pleased to announce that it is the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from BMO Harris Bank to support Wisconsin's Governor's Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business.

Recognizing the substantial contribution women business owners make to Wisconsin's economy, the Trailblazer Awards acknowledge the lasting economic impact provided by women who brought their vision to the marketplace at a time when there were few role models and resources to do so. These entrepreneurs created businesses that continue to support families, anchor communities, and carve a path for all women business owners today.

I was honored with a Trailblazer Award in 2012. Our family business has been a partner in our business and civic community for more than 40 years – a business built on a foundation of loyalty, long-term relationships, and investing in our community. It means a lot to see business partners like BMO Harris Bank bring those same values to our community in support of women's business ownership.

Sally Kujawa, CEO & Chairman
Kujawa Enterprises, Inc. Oak Creek

The BMO Harris Bank is a founding and continuing partner in this celebration of women's entrepreneurship and, in doing so, raising the profile of woman-owned businesses across Wisconsin.

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"We thank BMO Harris Bank for this grant and their long-standing support of the Trailblazer Awards. A key community-partner, BMO Harris Bank is clearly committed to advancing women's business ownership across Wisconsin," said Christine Lidbury, Executive Director, Wisconsin Women's Council. "By starting and sustaining businesses, exploring markets, creating jobs and stimulating economic growth, Wisconsin women business owners play a leading role in our economy. This grant provides the means to recognize these trailblazing entrepreneurs whose leadership continues to provide jobs, promote innovation, and benefit our communities."

Award categories include the *Business Pioneer Awards* honoring businesses with sole or majority ownership by a woman, or series of women, of the same company for 25 years or more; and *Torchbearer Awards* honoring family-owned businesses that are currently run by a female relative of the founder and have been in operation for three generations or more. Nominations for the 2014 Wisconsin Governor's Trailblazer Awards will open in mid-September 2013.

About Us

The Governor's Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business are presented by: the Office of the Governor; Office of the Lieutenant Governor; and Wisconsin Women's Council. Sponsors: BMO Harris Bank (Lead Sponsor); Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce; Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation; Wisconsin Women's Business Enterprise Certification Program at the Wisconsin Department of Administration; and The Widget Source.

The Wisconsin Women's Council, established in 1983, is Wisconsin's statutory commission on the status of women and girls. The Council promotes initiatives that empower women, serves as a clearinghouse for information on programs and resources, provides research and advocacy, and promotes unique partnerships to address barriers and inequalities affecting Wisconsin women. The Council operates under the guidance of a 15-Member Board appointed by the Governor and Legislative leaders.

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